

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

PALM SUNDAY

Matthew 21:1-14

Pastor George Clerie – April 13, 2014

MEMORY VERSE

“And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’”

(Matthew 21:9, ESV)

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Jesus has many names in the Bible (Lord, King of Kings, Immanuel, Christ, High Priest, Light of the World, Good Shepherd, Mediator, Prophet, Rabbi, Savior, Son of David, Son of God, Son of Man, Word, and more). Discuss the name(s) that are most meaningful to you and why.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Matthew 21:1-11

Jesus sends two disciples for a donkey and a colt, commandeering their use for his own processional approach to and entry into the city. As he sits on the animals, the crowds lining the streets spread branches and cloaks on the road and sing ‘Hosanna’ to him. This entry into Jerusalem is significant for several reasons:

1. It fulfills biblical prophecy (vv. 4-5)

- Read Zechariah 9:9-17

By quoting the prophecy, Matthew enables us to see one small part of the realization of God’s redemptive purpose. The prophet gives a sweeping vision, which takes in the whole of history. Now, at the point in time in which Jesus enters the city, part of the prediction is fulfilled and the prophecy takes a step forward. This is consonant with Matthew’s theme of the advent of the King.

- Which elements of the prophecy (Zec. 9:9-17) were clearly fulfilled in the events that took place in Jerusalem?

2. It Shows Jesus’ humble obedience (v. 5)



It is not merely riding on a donkey that makes Jesus humble. His very appearance in the world was a step of humility, and he has been taking such steps ever since, descending all the more into a situation of self-impoverishment and humility. In Paul's language, Jesus 'made himself nothing ... he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death' (Phil. 2:7–8). Nothing is more noteworthy than this: that the Jesus of all glory becomes the servant of no repute.

- What message do you think Jesus was giving as he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey? How does it illustrate Paul's point in Philippians 2:7, that Jesus "made himself nothing"? How can we be like Jesus?

3. It highlight's Jesus as both King and Prophet (vv. 8-11)

The crowds welcome Jesus as befits a king. But their answer to the question 'Who is this?' (v. 10) is 'This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.' Perhaps they are saying more than they realize; but what they are saying is the truth. Jesus has been commissioned by God both to declare the kingdom of heaven (as a prophet) and to inaugurate it (as a king).

- The crowds say that Jesus is a prophet (21:11). How does he fulfill the prediction of a prophet like Moses given in Deuteronomy 18:15-22?
- Why did the praises of the crowd so soon turn to shouts of "Crucify him!" in 27:22–23? In the light of verses like Acts 2:23 and 1 Corinthians 2:7–8, how does the cross help us to understand the relationship between God's sovereignty and our responsibility? How would you answer this question, "Was it right or wrong for Jesus to be crucified?"

GROUP ACTIVITY

As we approach Easter weekend, more than any other time of the year, people are most receptive to the idea of going to church. Discuss with your group those people (friends, family, coworkers, neighbors, and enemies) that you are going to invite to come to a Good Friday or Easter service. Make a commitment to pray everyday for these people and extend an invitation to join you at church this weekend.

Consider the following thoughts on evangelism and be encouraged to share the good news and to reach the lost.

- "While it is true that God gifts some for ministry as evangelists, He calls all believers to be His witnesses and provides them with both the power to witness and a powerful message." – Donald Whitney
- We need to learn that sharing the gospel *is* successful evangelism. The results are up to God.



- Evangelism is not just a spiritual gift and ministry, but a spiritual discipline. Unless we discipline ourselves for evangelism, it is very easy to excuse ourselves from ever sharing the gospel with anyone.

Notes:

